

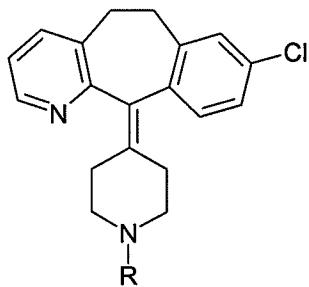
Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1-22. (Cancelled)

23. (New) A process for preparation of desloratadine, the process comprising: heating a compound of formula 3:



where R is -COOR₁, and R₁ is ethyl, in the presence of methanesulfonic acid for 5-15 hours at about 90° to 120°C to produce desloratadine; and

adjusting the pH of the hydrolysed reaction mixture to about 3 to 5;

wherein the desloratadine is greater than 99.5% pure by HPLC and a 5% (w/v) solution of the desloratadine in methanol has an absorbance less than 0.15 AU at 420 nm.

24. (New) The process of claim 23, further comprising purifying the desloratadine by: optionally, treating the pH adjusted reaction mixture with an adsorbent; adjusting the pH of the reaction mixture to greater than about 9; and isolating desloratadine by recrystallization from a solvent system comprising a mixture of an alcohol and a hydrocarbon solvent.

25. (New) The process of claim 24, wherein adsorbent is selected from charcoal, neutral or alkaline alumina, silica and fuller's earth.

26. (New) The process of claim 24, wherein the alcohol is methanol and the hydrocarbon solvent is cyclohexane.

27. (New) The process of claim 26, wherein the ratio of methanol:cyclohexane is 1:14 v/v.